(c) what is the present stage of consideration of the proposal and by when it would be approved and funds would be released?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS MAJOR GENERAL (RETD.) (B.C. KHANDURI): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. A request for additional allocation of Rs. 35.1 crores under NH(O) works during 2002-03 was received from the State PWD, Karnataka on 8-1-2003.

(c) Keeping in view availability of funds an additional allocation of Rs. 10.40 crores was made available for Karnataka.

Trans Asian Highway Network

3078. SHRI MAJOJ BHATTACHARYA: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government had some time back visualised a major Highway Project-Trans Asian Network linking Thailand, Myanmar, India and Bangladesh;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether a reference thereto was briefly made by the Prime Minister in the ASEAN meet held last year;

(d) whether any progress has since been made in relation thereto; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS [MAJOR GENERAL (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI]: (a) and (b) The route connecting Indo/Pakistan Border-Delhi-Kolkata—Indo/Bangladesh Border-Dhaka-Indo/Bangladesh Border-Shillong-Imphal-Moreh has been conceptualised as a part of the Asian Highway connecting India, Bangladesh, Myanmar and Thailand among other countries of Asia.

(c) to (e) No specific remark had been made by the Prime Minister in the ASEAN meet held last year. However, in general terms the Prime Minister did call for cooperation for the upgrading and strengthening of physical linkages, *inter-alia* through optimizing

synergies between sub-regional cooperation frameworks such as Mekong-Ganga Cooperation, BIMST-EC (Bangladesh, India, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Thailand-Economic Cooperation) an Greater Mekong Sub-Region (GMS).

Census of SSIs

3079. SHRIMATI S.G. IDIRA: Will the Minister of SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether a third census of Small Scale Industries has been conducted;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the findings thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) to (c) The Third Census of SSIs has been launched during October-November, 2002 all over the country through the State/UT Directorates of Industries (SDIs). The SSI units permanently registered till 31.3.2001 are covered on complete enumeration basis and the unregistered SSI units are covered on sample basis in a few selected villages and urban blocks. As per the latest reports received from the SDIS, data collection work has been completed in all the States except Karnataka, Bihar and Chhattisgarh. The findings of Third Census have not been brought out for want of completion of data collection work in these three States.

Mutual Credit Gurantee Scheme for SSIs

3080. SHRI RAMAMUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY: Will the Minister of SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are finalizing a plan for introduction of Mutual Credit Guarantee Scheme for SSIs;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) by when it is likely to be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES AND DEVELOPMENT OF NORTH-EASTERN REGION (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) to (c) The government of India has requested